Administrators Report

February 6th 2012

Water Treatment Plant Upgrade

On Tuesday, January 17, 2012, Shannon Industrial and engineers from Morrison and Maierle tried a new polymer in the screw press. This was the third attempt to find a polymer that would work with the sludge that our plant produces. So far they have been unsuccessful at finding a polymer that will bind to the sludge and will make a material that will meet the specifications that was laid out in the bid.

This attempt failed also. They feel they have the right polymer, but it still is not collecting the sludge together like it should. There is still a percentage that is returning back through the system that is not acceptable.

Under our contract with Shannon Industrial there is a provision for the city to impose “Liquidated Damages” if performance standards or contractual agreements for the work are not met. Shannon Industrial was issued a letter stating they had 3 weeks in which to meet the standard specifications in the contract or liquidated damages would be assessed. On Friday January 20, 2012 the city implemented this provision in the contract.

Shannon contacted M&M and said they would be on site the week of January 23, 2012. They were not. Representatives from Huber contacted Shannon and rescheduled for the 6th of February.

Energy Audit

Last summer the city received a grant from DEQ to have an energy audit done for the Water Treatment plant and the Waste water treatment plant. Brad Kastelitz, from Morrison and Maierle, worked with Jeff Haugen and Mike Voorhies to compile information from the plants to put the audit together. In January we received the findings of the audit. I have included an Executive Summary of the audits from each department. Also if you would like to review the entire audit I have them available in hard copy and also on a CD.

On January 26, 2012, I had a conference call with Ryan Jones and Brad Kastelitz from Morrison and Maierle, Shannyn Henkel, of Montana DEQ and Don Newton, with Flathead Electric Co-op to discuss “energy funding” that has become available to Montana DEQ. The funding is for any upgrades that have to do with saving energy at the WTP and WWTP. The city can receive up to $50,000 for new lighting and equipment, that has been determined in the audit that can save energy.

After going through the audit, we prioritized what we felt was the best options for saving money to the city. In the Executive Summary are the projects we recommended to MDEQ.

In the Water treatment plant:

1. EMC #1- Replacing existing lights
2. EMC #3-Insulate Surface water and Backwash filter tanks

In the Waste water treatment plant:

1. EMC #2- Replacing existing lights
2. EMC #3- Install new heat pump
3. EMC #5- New drives to Digester blowers

I have asked for the full amount of $50,000 but if we receive half that amount we will go back and reevaluate the list again. If we do receive the full amount and do the upgrades it is projected in the summary that the city could save almost $17,000 a year in energy costs. The estimates for the upgrades are just that “Estimates “and depending on how the project bids out we will have a better idea of the overall cost to do the upgrades.

Weather Station/ Early Warning System

The early warning system is in place. The sirens are all mounted, the electrical is hooked up and they are ready for testing. The weather station and the video camera at the dam are having issues with power. The batteries at both the gauging station that monitors inflow to the reservoir and at the dam, that powers the sensors for the early warning system, have lost the charge twice.

Robert Carlson charged the batteries from the old siren at Asa Wood and replaced the batteries at both locations. This was a temporary fix as the issue lies in the solar panels. John Humphreys from Sutron e-mailed me and recommend a larger panel at the dam. Then we can add the replaced panel at the dam to the existing panel located at the gauging station.

This will not happen until the weather is better in the spring so for now we will keep a spare bank of batteries ready if we lose power in the near future. Another problem that has come up is with the video camera. It was not powering up when activated so it was taken down and sent back to Sutron for repairs.

There is a website that can be accessed to look at the data from the weather station. You can go to [www.Sutronwin.com](http://www.Sutronwin.com). Click on the select “Report by region/site. Then “Select Region” box and “Libby-Libby Station” is where you want to go next. Then scroll down and there will be a list of all the different areas that are recorded. Only water temperature, inflow, air temperature and precipitation are available at this time. Sutron is still having issues with their server and the website has been down a lot lately. John Humphreys has assured Vic and I that they will have the bugs worked out soon.

Departments

Well winter has finally arrived. Crews have been busy plowing snow and picking up the berms. And of course “Murphy’s Law” seems to always interject at the wrong time, if there ever is a right time. Machinery has been breaking down when we need it the most. The grader went down with issues when the snow was very wet and heavy. On the heels of this we lost a tire on our loader and could not find one locally. A replacement had to be ordered and it took a week for it to arrive. It turned out they ordered the wrong type of tire. The same loader had an alternator quit working and that had to be replaced. The newer loader is having a problem with the fuel injectors. Steve Hogan figured out the problem and ordered new parts. The crew did a great job for all the issues they were dealing with. Besides all the plowing, they removed over 270 loads of snow from town. The good news is spring is only 7 weeks away!

As you know the Waste water plant is still having issues with the new press. The old press is still plugging along, but the crew had to fill another bed that they had hoped they would not have to do anymore. The new boiler is in at the Water treatment plant and seems to be worker well. Columbia Mountain Heating did the work on replacing the boiler. They also replaced and repaired the heating system at the water treatment plant. The old computer at the WWTP went down on Friday the 27th of January. Robert Salter called me at 8:30 pm about the problem. A call was made to Devin Bucher from Columbia Falls. Devin has worked on the WWTP’s SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisitions) before and mentioned in the past that the computer is old and would have to be replaced. Rather than buying a new computer, Robert is defragging one of the computers we replaced at city hall. He is confident that this will take care of the problem.

Water treatment is looking into replacing two “check valves” that control the pumps for the Cabinet Heights water district. This area of the distribution system is not “gravity” fed like the rest of town. The water is pumped and maintained at a certain pressure because of the elevation at Cabinet Heights in relationship to the plant. These valves keep pressure up in the system and with them starting to show signs of failing, the pumps have to run longer due to water running back into the clear well. This should be completed by the end of February.

Last week electricians from Strom Electrical started the retrofit of lights at city hall. This project will take about a week and half to complete. Total cost of the retrofit is over $15,000. After the rebates to the city, total cost will be $5,190. With an energy saving of 26% per year, the project will be paid for in just under 4 years.

Jim Hammons